

Junior high student begins Baptist Pen Pals for Peace

By Sherianne Bangham
MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP) — For Courtney Walsh, a day without a letter is a rarity. In fact, a day without six or seven is unusual.

It takes that many for her to keep up with her 200 pen pals. Walsh, a seventh-grade student at White Station Junior High School here, is founder and currently main correspondent of Baptist Pen Pals for Peace, an international effort at bringing Baptist young people together in a quest for peace.

"I've grown up being taught that

peace is the only way," said the 12-year-old student, "that Jesus taught peace is the only way. It was the only way in his life, and it should be the only way in our lives."

God made the world for all people to share, Walsh said. And it is important for people to get to know people in other countries, even people they may never have the opportunity to see, she added.

Through Baptist Pen Pals, she hopes to help make such relationships come about.

Walsh proposed the project last

August at the International Baptist Peace Conference in Sjovik, Sweden. She attended the conference with her parents. Tom Walsh, her father, is vice president of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America.

When she read her proposal before the 175 delegates from 26 countries, she received spontaneous applause and promises of support. Baptist Times of London even ran a front-page article on her proposal.

Thirty participants from Canada, Sweden, Australia, and the United States have joined her. And Courtney

receives requests for information from others each week. The organization is for young people up to age 18.

"We do have one person who didn't understand who is 21," she said. "But we're not going to kick her out."

The idea for Baptist Pen Pals began with Courtney's interest in making friends in other countries. Last year she placed an ad for a pen pal in a teen magazine, and her hobby grew from there. Her 200 pen pals are located in 18 countries and range in age from seven to 37.

"I think it's important for children

to get to know children in other countries," she said. "Maybe as kids they'll do something that will carry on as adults."

Ken Sehested, executive director of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America, agrees. "It's hard to hate someone who has a face," he said.

The peace fellowship supplies Courtney with stationery, stamps, and space in its office at Prescott Memorial Baptist Church in Memphis.

Sherianne Bangham is a freshman at Memphis State University.

Thankless people

By Frank Gunn
Luke 17:11-19

Another Thanksgiving season is now upon us. I think we automatically find ourselves more expressive with our gratitude. The reason also convicts most of us of our thankless response and their ingratitude is a common sin among us all.



Gunn

a thankless child!"

I am afraid much of our ingratitude is because of our personal negligence. This is typified by an experience I had several weeks ago up in North Carolina. I try to walk a few miles most days, so I had selected a route for my exercise. It was a dirt road, bordering a lake, with trees on either side. They had just covered the road with rock so I walked with my eyes watching where I would be stepping. As I rounded a curve, the road was straight for a long way ahead. I remember looking up and seeing the most gorgeous sight. The trees depicted every fall color imaginable right there beside the lake. I was overwhelmed with the beauty of God's creation and the fact it was there all along and I had not lifted my eyes to see it. This might well be defined as an unconscious oversight on my part. Immediately, I thanked and praised God for the privilege of being a part of something so beautiful.

This Thanksgiving season will provide a great opportunity for us all. It can offer a new beginning — a more grateful you!

Let us remember the challenge of David in Psalm 103, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits."

Gunn is pastor, First, Biloxi.

"Jesus gave thanks and broke bread"

Many worried weeks have gone astray since Mama's grey cat, now nine years old, got scared of my black lab and ran away into the woods. Is she like me? Sometimes I abandon the safest place, not trusting God's unwavering grace, and run straight into danger.

There's no one to feed her but me. I'd find her if lost. I'd climb the highest tree. With greater compassion God takes care of me.

Today she meowed and stalked in, feather-light, through my kitchen door, and she's all right.

My grandchildren, Damen and Beverly Jan, sit at my holiday table, and like my Grandma Cain at this same table with us five children a lifetime ago, I repeat as in a chain: "Father, we thank thee for what thou hast provided. May it strengthen us to serve thee. Save us, for Jesus' sake, amen."

—Violet Reeves Tackett
McComb

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, November 17, 1988

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Nigerians rebuild churches burned by Muslims in '87

By Marie Johnston

ZARIA, Nigeria (BP) — Last year's destruction of Baptist churches by Nigerian Muslims has caused congregations to plan not only for new buildings but bigger ones.

Attendance at worship services in Nigeria also has increased, even though congregations are meeting in temporary and borrowed buildings, observers reported.

Muslims burned 10 Baptist churches and several parsonages in Zaria, Nigeria, during religious rioting in March 1987 that also claimed churches of other Christian denominations in that area. Six Baptist churches in nearby Kaduna also were burned. But the Christians' refusal to retaliate has inspired some Muslims to look closely at Christianity and in some cases to accept Christ as their savior.

Southern Baptist missionaries Payton and Helen Myers of West Point, Miss., have moved to Zaria to help with reconstruction and the starting of new churches.

Kwanglia Baptist Church in Zaria already has replaced its burned building with a larger one, but plans and finances for a new structure were in the works before the burnings. Southern Baptist missionary Jim Johnston of Anchorage, Ky., is interim pastor there.

Other congregations are awaiting approval of building plans before starting construction. They have received construction funds from church members and the Nigerian government. The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board provided \$100,000 for reconstruction.

The Christian congregations believe God is working through this tragedy, members said.

"It might have been many years before we would have stepped out in faith to build a needed larger church building," a church member said.



Mission study: Nigeria

The parents of these children are leaders in the faith among Baptists in Nigeria, the country featured in this year's adult study of foreign missions. The children pictured here are playing in the recreation area of the Baptist Pastors' School in Kaduna. Another Baptist Pastors' School is located in Eku. (FMB) PHOTO By Don Rutledge

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
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Editorials . . . by Don McGregor

All the news

A few days ago a local newspaper took occasion to point out to readers what a newspaper is and what it is supposed to do. The point was, and is, that a newspaper does not always purvey what the readers want to read. If it is to present the news, however, it must endeavor to present all of the news that it has room to print, whether it is good news or bad news.

Baptists operate in a pure democracy. A democracy can work only when the people who are a part of it are informed. That is the purpose of the newspaper. That is its mandate. It has no other choice.

There are times when people deliberately keep newspapers from knowing the news, and the newspaper cannot do anything about that. When it knows the news, however, it must present it — good or bad. Many times readers do not want to read the bad

news. They say it is discouraging and we would get along better if we didn't know it. In the meantime, the cause of the bad news would continue to prosper.

It is much akin to going to a doctor. The doctor might say to himself, "This person has a heart problem; but if I tell him that, it will make him feel bad." So he just tells the person that he is in fine shape and go on home and forget it. Under those conditions, the doctor would be guilty of criminal negligence.

So much for the bad news. Now for the good. The fact of the matter is that the Baptist Record presents 780 inches of material each week. Of that, no more than 78 inches can be advertising from outside of the Mississippi Baptist family. So there is usually in the neighborhood of 700 inches of

story material. An estimation would be that of the 700 inches, maybe 100 inches is bad news. The remainder is good news. It is news of victories in churches, of what God's people are doing in Mississippi, of victories that are being won on the mission fields, three Sunday School lesson commentaries, a devotional thought, and many other positive features.

There is one overarching policy at the Baptist Record. That is that anything that comes from a local church that has any news value at all gets in. We may and do leave out a lot of Baptist Press news from all over the nation and the world. The Mississippi local church news gets in in some fashion.

We are a newspaper, and we tell the news. The overwhelming preponderance of it is good news.

We like that.

"WHEN YOU PREACH HERE, SON, YOU HAVE TO SHOUT—BECAUSE THE AGNOSTICS ARE TERRIBLE IN THIS BUILDING!"

JOE MCKEEVER



An accelerated pace

As the years roll along at an increasingly greater pace, it seems that holidays come around with greater frequency than in the days of youth. Thus it seems that it is much too soon to be the Thanksgiving season again, but that day is just a week away.

Thanksgiving is a highly important observance in American life, and it is strictly an American observance. It originated with the feeling of thankfulness that the earliest settlers on American soil were able to survive to that point, and it has continued to be a traditional observance since that time.

Now there are hundreds of millions of Americans rather than the small band of those early years; and,

generally, survival is not so much of a factor as it was then.

Thanksgiving for well-being continues to be a need, however, to this day.

It seems that Thanksgiving should be an observance rather than a holiday, but the fact is that we have let both the observance concept and the thanksgiving concept slip away from us.

No longer is it a day of thanksgiving but a day of big football games and big meals. These changing concepts are also coming along at an accelerated rate.

Ours is not a position of complaining about those who do not observe Thanksgiving. They don't observe it because they have no relationship to

the God who is the author of all things for which we should give thanks. And somehow we have to accept responsibility for that condition.

Ours is a position of acknowledging the source of all of our blessings and of being cognizant of the need to be thankful for those blessings. And Thanksgiving must be a time of giving attention to the need for thankfulness.

Thankfulness, however, should know no season. Thanksgiving Day should serve as a reminder of our need to give thanks. It should not be a limit on when thanks are to be given.

We as children of God should set the pattern for our being a thankful nation as Thanksgiving Day rolls around next Thursday.

Hymns Baptists sing . . .

"The Lily of the Valley"

Will Hays left Georgetown College in Kentucky when he was 22 to become a river-front reporter. In 1868, he joined the staff of Louisville's *Courier-Journal*; and for 30 years he wrote a daily column containing river news, gossip, witticisms, and light verse. He also had great success writing minstrel songs very popular at that time, and was second only to Stephen Collins Foster in that area. One of Hays's songs, "The Little Old

Log Cabin Down the Lane," written in 1871, strangely provided the tune for "The Lily of the Valley."

Charles W. Fry, in the construction business in Salisbury, England, loved to play the cornet and taught his three sons to play instruments. The four of them, known as the Fry Family Band, became the first Salvation Army Band. One day, in 1881, Fry heard the strains of Will Hays's tune being played in a Music Hall in London. He wrote down the melody and in a few days he had written three stanzas. The phrase "The Lily of the Valley" is found in Song of Solomon 2:1, and the "Bright and Morning Star" is in Revelation 22:16.

In 1902, in the cloister of England's Salisbury Cathedral, a plaque was erected inscribed "To commemorate the centenary of the promotion to glory of CHARLES WILLIAM FRY, first bandmaster of the Salvation Army, born Alderbury, 29 May 1837, died Polmont, Scotland, 24 August 1882. The clarion call of his cornet sounded in the Market Place, Salisbury, in the autumn of 1878, now echoes around the world."

Will Hays died in Louisville in 1907, and, in all probability, never knew that a cornet player in England had converted his minstrel song into a gospel song that sings of Jesus Christ, the "Lily of the Valley."

William J. Reynolds is professor of church music at Southwestern Seminary.

Baptist beliefs . . . The indwelling Spirit

By Herschel H. Hobbs

"Ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." — John 14:17b

This verse was spoken by Jesus prior to his death. It was prior to Pentecost, when the Spirit came upon the church in power (Acts 2:1-4). Note the present tense "dwelleth." Already the Spirit indwelt the apostles and would continue to do so.

The New Testament teaches that at the moment of regeneration the believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13b-14). His presence is evidence that you are saved (Rom. 8:9b). Though the Corinthian Christians did not act very saintly, Paul says that our bodies are the "temple" [naos, Holy of Holies] of the Holy Ghost [Spirit] (1 Cor. 6:19). So that wherever you go and whatever you do,

the Spirit is present in you. What a sobering thought!

But while all Christians are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, not all are filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18). Through its wiring a building may be indwelt with electricity. But for it to be filled with its power requires bulbs, motors, and the like through which to express its power.

In like fashion, for Christians to be filled with the Spirit requires that we yield our bodies and all their powers to the Holy Spirit in order that, through us, he may exert his power. You are indwelt by the Spirit. God wills that you be filled with His power as an instrument in the Lord's work.

Herschel Hobbs is pastor emeritus of First Church, Oklahoma City.

Mid East's ancient churches draw evangelical attention

ROCKVILLE, Va. (BP) — Many busloads of tourists never stop at some of the most enduring signs of Christianity in the Middle East: churches linked to age-old branches of the faith.

They are churches with 10 million or more members, and there are numerous reports of spiritual renewal among them.

At the same time, these ancient communions — such as the Coptic Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox and Armenian Apostolic churches — warily watch the aggressive march of Islam and the resolute "this-is-our-land" Zionism within Israel.

Many Christians in the United States "don't know there's a church in the Middle East, what its problems are, what its possibilities are,"

reported Ray Bakke, professor of ministry at Chicago's Northern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Bakke was among several evangelical leaders who organized a conference on the Middle East Oct. 25-26, held at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's Missionary Learning Center in Rockville, Va.

The 40 participants included representatives from a variety of U.S. denominations as well as such evangelical organizations as the Foreign Mission Board, the Navigators, Moody Bible Institute and the Christian Broadcasting Network.

Bakke expressed hope that the discussion conference would be part of an awakening among evangelicals to the range of issues facing the Middle East.

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MBC messengers vote special Clarke funds

By Tim Nicholas

The Mississippi Baptist Convention, meeting at First Church, Jackson, this week, voted 871 to 413 to approve a motion from Mississippi College to give Clarke College special funding totaling \$200,000.

Additionally, the Mississippi Baptist Education Commission was asked by the William Carey College trustees to begin a special study of Carey.

At press time, the convention had not decided from where the additional funding for Clarke would be coming, but the two to one margin indicated a clear desire on the part of messengers to continue the existence of their Newton County-based junior college. Also, at press time, the budget had not yet been adopted.

Mississippi College President Lewis Nobles, acting on a request from MC trustees, during discussion of the 1989 Cooperative Program budget, said that "Mississippi College has looked at the future operation of Clarke College in a very careful light, and that it will be impossible for Mississippi College to continue to operate Clarke on the present financial basis and that the Trustees recommend to the Mississippi Baptist Convention that a line item of \$200,000 for Clarke College be included in the budget each year to enable Clarke College to operate in the black. Furthermore, Mississippi College feels that without this kind of funding, it would not be feasible to continue the operation of Clarke College."

In his report to the Convention Tuesday morning, William Stewart, Education Commission chairman, noted that the Carey trustees had

been polled and voted unanimously to approve a recommendation of President J. Ralph Noonkester "that the Education Commission make a study of the financial status, organizational structure, administrative practices, and use of college endowment funds and report its findings and recommendation to the William Carey College Board of Trustees."

The previous morning the Carey trustees met with the Education Commission at the invitation of the Commission to consider ways to re-unite the seriously divided group of Carey trustees.

Out of that meeting came the offer of the Commission to help, should the Carey board invite them to do so.

This move offers a channel for critics of the college and its administration to air their grievances through a neutral deliberative body.

The nature of accreditation requires trustee boards to have the final say in matters of college governance. However, trustees may engage the services of outside advisors when they wish.

In an unprecedented move, a convention institution trustee was replaced on the Committee on Nominations report after a challenge by a Carey student Jeff Rimes. Rimes nominated Randy Davis, pastor of First Church, Vancleave, to replace Lewis Fowler, whom Rimes said only began attending trustee meetings after the recent vote to replace Noonkester as president. That vote was later rescinded. Messengers approved the substitution and then approved the slate of nominees to boards and agencies.

The Second Front Page

The Baptist Record

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Evangelism Conference is set for Meridian



Newell



Hill



Miller



Barker



Hutchinson



Causey

"Making Jesus Your Lord" is the theme for the 1989 Mississippi Baptist Evangelism Conference set for Feb. 6-8 at First Baptist Church, Meridian.

The conference, which features 13 sermons, several testimonies, plus gospel singing, begins at 6:35 p.m., Feb. 6, and concludes at noon, Feb. 8.

The opening session will have David Miller, a Mississippi native and director of missions for Little Red River Association in Arkansas, speak on "Making Jesus Lord of Your Mind." Also, Junior Hill, a full time evangelist for 21 years in Alabama, will speak on "Making Jesus Lord of Your Devotional Life."

The second session begins at 8:45 Tuesday morning. David Miller will speak on "Fishers of Men." Bill Causey, pastor of Parkway Baptist Church, Jackson, will speak on "Making Jesus Lord in Your Ministry." And Junior Hill will speak on "The Successful Minister — By Whose Standard?"

The Tuesday afternoon session will feature Charles Page, pastor of First Baptist Church, Nashville, who will



Crowell



Page



Richardson



Douglas

preach on "Making Jesus Lord of Your Possessions." James Richardson, pastor of First Baptist Church, Madison, who will preach on "Making Jesus Lord of Your Home," and Clark Hutchinson, pastor of Eastside Baptist Church, Marietta, Ga., will preach on "Making Jesus Lord of Your Work and Leisure."

Tuesday evening will feature Altus Newell, pastor of Dawson Memorial Baptist Church, Birmingham, who will preach on "Making Jesus Lord of Your Time," and Charles Page, preaching on "Making Jesus Lord Through Your Prayer and Fasting."

The final session, Wednesday mor-

ning, will offer Clark Hutchinson, speaking on "Equipping the Saints for Ministry," and Altus Newell on "Here Am I, Lord, Send Me."

Ron Barker, Home Mission Board staffer in evangelism, will talk about the simultaneous revival called "Here's Hope — 1990." And two persons will give Christian testimonies. Grady Crowell, director of missions for Clarke Association, and Bobby Douglas, pastor of First Baptist Church, Columbus, will both participate.

The program is sponsored by the Evangelism Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Congress enacts measures: child porn, alcohol labels

WASHINGTON (BP) — Congress' last-minute passage of an omnibus drug bill has resulted in the enactment of several unrelated measures, including child pornography and alcohol-labeling legislation.

At the core of the drug bill is the provision of \$500 million in federal funds this fiscal year for increasing drug enforcement efforts, stiffening criminal and civil penalties for drug sellers and users, and expanding drug education, treatment, and rehabilitation programs.

But the measure also gave Congress an opportunity to act on other pieces of legislation by attaching them to the drug bill.

A child pornography amendment, sponsored by Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., bans the buying and selling of children for use in child pornography. It also stiffens penalties against people convicted of selling or possessing with intent to sell child pornography and other obscene materials.

In addition, the measure requires producers of sexually explicit material to document the ages of people appearing in the material. It also prohibits the use of computers to distribute or advertise child pornography.

The amendment also contains anti-obscenity provisions allowing the federal government to prosecute regular traffickers in obscene materials and to confiscate the profits gained from and property directly used in committing an obscenity offense.

Thurmond also sponsored an amendment that requires warning labels on alcoholic-beverage containers. The measure makes illegal the manufacture, import, bottle for sale, or distribution in the United States of any alcoholic beverage unless its container bears a label stating: "Government Warning: (1) According to the Surgeon General, women should not drink alcoholic beverages during pregnancy because of the risk of birth defects. (2) Consumption of alcoholic beverages impairs your ability to drive a car or operate machinery and may cause health problems."

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Executive Committee votes for relief aid to Zion Rest

The Executive Committee of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, meeting in Jackson last week, voted to grant up to \$2,500 to Zion Rest Baptist Church in Wayne Association for tornado damage repairs. The money comes out of disaster relief funds.

In other business, the committee approved equipment expenditure and

voted on some new board members replacing some resigning.

The purchase is a new boiler for the Baptist Building furnace at \$38,670 and new board members are James Berch, Copiah/Lincoln Associations; Earl Ezell, Washington; Charles McAnally, Tishomingo; Thomas Tutor, North Delta; Al Gaspard, Chickasaw; and Avery Jones, Clay.

Foreign Mission Board

Phone line to answer rumors

By Art Toalston

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board is opening a special telephone line to counter "misinformation and rumors" about its work.

FMB AnswerLine — (804) 254-9403 — will be manned by mission board administrators weekdays from Nov. 14 to Dec. 16, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST.

"We are trying to provide a straightforward response to any questions or concerns Southern Baptists have," explained FMB President R. Keith Parks.

Ongoing tensions in the Southern Baptist Convention have eroded "the level of trust in and credibility of some of our missions efforts," he said.

Because of budget constraints, a regular long distance call will be needed for FMB AnswerLine.

One example of rumors circulating among Southern Baptists is that the Foreign Mission Board's current budget shortfall will require 1,000 missionaries to return home next year, board officials said. Another rumor is that the board plans to abandon medical mission work and other human needs ministries, they said.

Both rumors are false, said Bob Desbien, assistant vice president for public relations.

The mission board's 1989 budget adopted by its trustees falls below the 1988 budget, and missionaries have pared their operating budgets by 12 percent. But no overseas personnel cuts are in the works, Desbien said.

Concern over human needs ministries arose following erroneous

news reporting about the board's 10-year plan to have 70 percent of its personnel devoting more than half of their time to evangelism and church planting, he added.

Addressing trustees in October, Parks also targeted rumors that "extreme ultraconservatives" intend to purge missionaries and staff and drastically alter the board's direction.

"I have said privately, publicly, and in print that this is not true," Parks said. Rumors alleging missionaries are uncommitted to evangelism and sound biblical doctrine are equally unfounded, he said.

FMB AnswerLine will not replace the board's toll-free PrayerLine, which relays global prayer concerns seven days per week, 24 hours per day.

Art Toalston writes for the FMB.



"M" Night — November 28

DONELSON, Tenn. — Lani Morris, member of Two Rivers Baptist Church, Donelson, Tenn., "gets back to basics" through Bible study. The theme for "M" Night 1988, an event emphasizing the importance of church training, is "A Call to Baptist Basics." The basics for Southern Baptists are evangelism and discipleship — reaching people for Christ and leading them to grow toward spiritual maturity. "M" Night will be observed November 28 in many associations. — BSSB photo by Jim Veneman.

National CP gifts start fiscal year below pace

NASHVILLE (BP) — Southern Baptists' combined ministry budget started its fiscal year below its pace for the previous year.

October receipts for the conventionwide Cooperative Program totaled \$10,951,615, announced Harold C. Bennett, president and treasurer of the convention's Executive Committee.

The October receipts were 0.48 percent, or \$53,315, below receipts for October 1987, Bennett said. The current fiscal year began Oct. 1.

The Cooperative Program is the denomination's unified budget, which finances missionary, evangelistic, educational and church-starting endeavors around the world. Its 1988-89 goal is \$145.6 million, up 4 percent from 1987-88.

Cooperative Program money begins as contributions individual Southern Baptists make to their local churches. An average of 8.4 percent of those gifts are forwarded to 39 Baptist state conventions and fellowships, which pass 38.69 percent of their

receipts to the conventionwide budget.

The October receipts set the Cooperative Program about 4.5 percent behind the U.S. inflation rate, which hovers at about 4 percent.

Average monthly receipts of slightly more than \$12.1 million were needed to reach the annual Cooperative Program goal. Due to the October shortfall, average receipts for the remaining 11 months must be more than \$12.24 million. Only three monthly receipts — the last three Januarys — have met or exceeded that amount.

October receipts comprised the 15th-best monthly total in Cooperative Program history, but 20 of the 39 state conventions or fellowships received less than they did in October 1987.

Bennett expressed "keen disappointment" in the drop in Cooperative Program gifts. "Our world mission program could be hurt even more if such a trend were to continue," he said. "On some mission fields, the inflation rate is far greater than it is in the United States."

Northeast moves closer to goal

PITTSBURGH (BP) — Members of the Southern Baptist Northeast Task Team on Theological Education heard progress reports on the first two educational centers in their area and elected new leadership during their fall meeting here.

They hope to begin offering the master of divinity and master of arts in Christian education here and in Boston beginning next fall.

The Northeastern Baptist School of Ministry is a joint project of the task team, the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and the six seminaries.

Introduced as director of the Pittsburgh center was Wilmer Bennett, a retired school administrator from Washington. Bennett and his wife, Miriam, will work with the center as Mission Service Corps volunteers.

Church celebrates 20 years in NYC's largest housing project

By Joe Westbury

NEW YORK (BP) — Sandwiched between the glistening skyscrapers of New York City and LaGuardia Airport, the 17-story red-brick apartment buildings of LeFrak City stand as a symbol of high density living in the nation's most crowded metropolis. So said a group of missionaries including a Mississippi couple.

But they also stand as testimony to Southern Baptist resolve to reach the cities for Christ, three home missionary couples who ministered there in separate terms of service during the past two decades related.

The couples were part of a reunion of Baptists from around the country who gathered in New York City in mid-October to celebrate the anniversary of United Trinity Baptist Church at LeFrak City, one of the nation's largest private apartment complexes.

The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board appointed the first missionary couple to the massive housing complex in 1967, and the church was begun the following year.

The 20 buildings, which house nearly 25,000 residents, are home to more than gangs, drug dealers and breadwinners down on their luck. LeFrak also houses people in need of a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ, the missionaries said.

"LeFrak is not a success today because of street corner preaching — it exists because people were loved one-on-one through a personal relationship," said Don Rhymes, who began the ministry with his wife, Goldie, in 1967.

As Rhymes, currently minister of evangelism at First Baptist Church in Jackson, Miss., spoke of the past, nearly 300 residents filled a basement room borrowed for the anniversary service. The crowd was too large to fit into the two small apartments where the 57-member congregation regularly meets for worship services.

The Rhymeses were trailblazers in home missions when they first moved into LeFrak, a prestigious upper-middle-class community that promised a self-contained lifestyle in an otherwise hostile urban environment.

"We were the first home missionaries Southern Baptists ever assigned to minister in an apartment complex. Since there were restrictions against any kind of ministry in those days, we moved in as tenants to establish ourselves with the community," Rhymes recalled.

Early attempts to borrow a community room for worship services was met with antagonism by the management, who countered with steep ren-

tal fees to discourage the request. So, the couple began Sunday morning Bible studies in their apartment.

LeFrak, which offered residents complete shopping, dining, medical, and entertainment facilities on the grounds, quickly developed an international flavor, as employees of the United Nations moved into the community. "You could be born, live your life, and die and never need to leave the complex," Rhymes remembered.

But that sense of heaven-on-earth quickly turned into a living hell. Within a year, the first major outbreaks of vandalism had gained a foothold in the community. The management, who remembered the couple's request for a place to worship, had a change of heart and offered the Rhymeses free space for their previously banned ministry.

Those early days with 11 founding members have now grown into two decades of service with a church membership of nearly 60 members representing 15 nationalities. And it continues to provide the only Baptist ministry in the community of 25,000 residents.

One of the congregation's first ministries — day care for preschool children — remains a popular ministry of the church.

Barbara Brewer, who first visited LeFrak on a summer missions trip from Immanuel Baptist Church in Greenville, N.C., has coordinated the effort for the past seven years as a volunteer missionary.

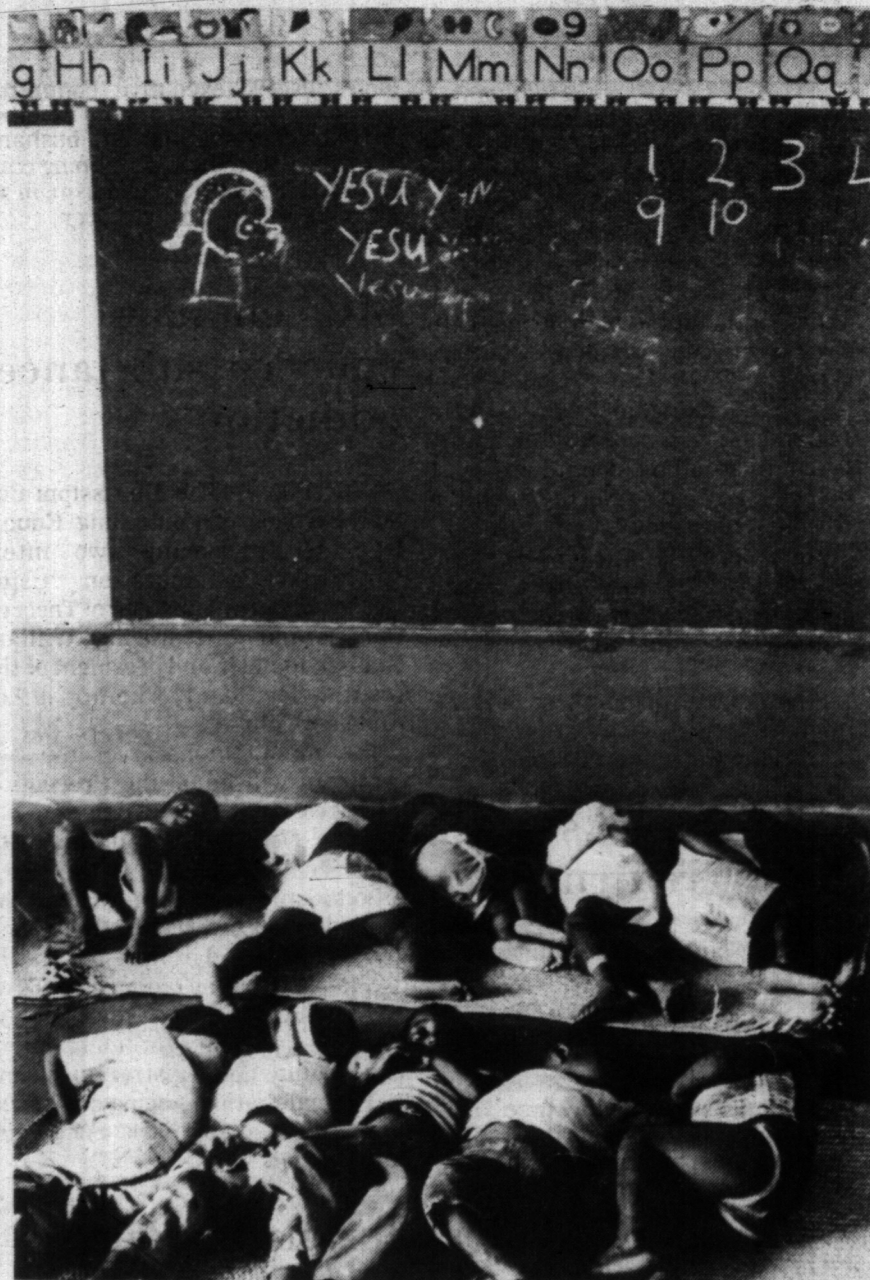
1st, Natchez honors pastor on 15th year

First Church, Natchez, honored its pastor, Odean W. Puckett, on Oct. 16, for "15 years of dedicated and loving service."

A resolution proclaiming the day to be Odean W. Puckett Day was read by the chairman of deacons, Albert Duck, in the morning service. Puckett and his wife, Martha, were presented a canceled loan as a gift from the church family. An afternoon reception was held in honor of the Pucketts. A service of praise in the evening included some of Puckett's favorite adult choir anthems. The church organist and pianist, Dale and Kay Owens, also performed some of his favorite instrumental choices.

In the past 15 years, 1,619 people have joined First, Natchez, with 491 baptisms. The Sunday School has grown in enrollment by 558. The annual giving total has multiplied fivefold to \$1,027,577. In 1976 the church voted to relocate, without a dissenting vote. The church moved in 1979, and a colonial designed sanctuary was constructed in 1984.

Puckett preached the annual sermon at the 1986 Mississippi Convention. He serves on the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.



Sleepy Heads — The parents of these children attend the Baptist Pastors' School in Kawa, outside Kaduna, Nigeria. It's midday rest period in this one classroom at the children's school. The Pastors' School provides training for pastors primarily in northern Nigeria. Southern Baptist missionaries work closely with Nigerian Baptists in theological training, though the Nigerian Baptist Convention was organized in 1914 and is well established. (FMB) PHOTO By Don Rutledge



Puckett

Las Vegas fills housing requests

LAS VEGAS, Nev. (BP) — More than 5,000 Southern Baptists have been assigned hotel accommodations for their convention's annual meeting next summer in Las Vegas, Nev.

The Las Vegas Convention and Visitors' Authority has assigned 5,440 rooms to participants in the June 13-15 meeting, announced Convention Manager Tim A. Hedquist.

Indeed, convention housing should not be a problem in Las Vegas, he noted.

The resort city already is home to more than 51,000 hotel rooms, and more are being built. That's 5,000 rooms more than the largest number of people ever registered for a Southern Baptist meeting.

Midwestern OKs endowment fund

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP) — Trustees of Midwestern Seminary have voted to raise \$50,000 to support the Leonard Sanderson Professorship in Evangelism.

During the Oct. 17-18 semi-annual meeting, trustees and former trustees of the school were asked to accept a challenge to raise a minimum of \$1,000 each from outside sources and/or personal contributions.

A formal effort to raise \$250,000 in total contributions to establish the Sanderson professorship was approved during the April trustee meeting.

The first named professorship in Midwestern's 30-year history honors Sanderson, a leader in Southern Baptist evangelism who has been a visiting professor of evangelism at the seminary since 1983. A minimum of \$250,000 in endowment funds is required to establish the professorship, which will provide about one-half the salary of a full-time professor of evangelism at Midwestern.

HMB endorses 22 chaplains

Atlanta (BP) — The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board endorsed 22 chaplains Oct. 23 in the agency's first bilingual commissioning service.

The 90-minute service at First Hispanic Baptist Church in Atlanta was translated into English and Spanish by Pastor Bob Sena.

Of the 22 chaplains endorsed in Atlanta, 10 will serve in the military, four at institutions and eight at health-care facilities.

Lab to open for sleep disorders

A laboratory for the diagnosis, evaluation and treatment of sleep disorders has opened at Mississippi Baptist Medical Center in Jackson.

Nearly one-third of Americans suffer from some type of sleep disorder which can make their sleeping or waking hours miserable. People who

have disturbed sleep often have difficulty functioning during the day.

"Some of the symptoms you might look for," according to Ginger Blatt, lab supervisor, "are excessive daytime sleepiness, fatigue, unexplained morning headache, high blood pressure, memory loss, difficulty concentrating, aching in the legs in the morning, and personality changes. Or, your family might comment that you snore loudly, gasp for breath and suddenly move before you start breathing again."

A request for a sleep evaluation can be initiated by a physician or self-referred by calling the Sleep Disorders Laboratory at Mississippi Baptist Medical Center at 968-1157 or 1-800-543-6583.

Women name man.

MCLEAN, Va. (BP) — The Southern Baptist Women in Ministry steering committee has named the first man in its five-year history to serve on the committee.

Edgar Tanner, coordinator of field supervision at Houston (Texas) Baptist University, was elected to fill a one-year term created by the resignation of Isabel Austin of Washington.

First, Atlanta will relocate

ATLANTA (BP) — Members of First Baptist Church of Atlanta voted Oct. 16 to move the 140-year-old downtown church to the city's northern suburbs.

Charles Stanley, former Southern Baptist Convention president and pastor of the church for the past 18 years, outlined the plan during both Sunday morning worship services.

Later that evening in a called business meeting, members decided to purchase a 52-acre tract in a mixed commercial-residential area just off Interstate 285 at North Peachtree Road in Dunwoody.

The property is owned by Avon Products Inc., a New York-based cosmetics firm that maintains its regional office and distribution site there.

First Baptist will purchase the \$22.5 million property for \$20 million, with the difference being a gift from Avon.

Faculty seeks Silers' return

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP) — The faculty of Southeastern Seminary has called for Mahan and Janice Silers' return to the classroom.

The Silers have been adjunct professors at the Wake Forest, N.C., seminary for six years, team-teaching a marriage enrichment course. He is pastor of Pullen Memorial Baptist Church in nearby Raleigh, and she is a marriage and family counselor.

Southeastern trustees decided in a closed session not to continue the Silers' adjunctive term.

The reason for the Silers' discontinuation has not been made public. The Southeastern Seminary chapter of the American Association of University Professors, which includes all the seminary's full-time faculty, some adjunct professors and some staff, now has called on the trustees to reverse their decision.

Southern begins campus expansion

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Southern Seminary here broke ground Sept. 13 for construction of a \$15.9 million campus center complex.

The complex will house comprehensive facilities for physical fitness and wellness, including a gymnasium, natatorium, racquetball courts, exercise rooms, locker facilities, and elevated running track.

The campus center, to be built in three phases, also will include a chapel; student cafeteria, conference rooms, banquet and private dining rooms, administrative offices, medical clinic, book store, student commons area, and post office.

Missionaries elect 'Madam Moderator'

JAKARTA, Indonesia — For the first time in the 37 years Southern Baptist missionaries have served in Indonesia, they have elected a woman to be moderator for official meetings.

The woman, Hazel Barron of Richton, Miss., will chair the mission's 1989-90 executive committee sessions and its 1989 annual meeting. In Indonesia she and her husband, Tom, have worked in developing churches and in student evangelism, in addition to raising two children.

MC seminars concern substance addiction

CLINTON — The Mississippi College Division of Continuing Education, is sponsoring two interdisciplinary seminars on "Using Reality Therapy and Control Theory," Dec. 6 and 7, featuring William Glasser, founder and president of the Institute for Reality Therapy in Los Angeles, Calif.

The main emphasis of the two seminars will be on the Prevention and Treatment of Substance Addiction, on Dec. 6, and Working with Adolescents, on Dec. 7.

Both seminars will take place at the Ramada Renaissance located on East County Line Road in Jackson. The individual fee for one day will be \$50 or \$90 for both days. A reduced fee is available for groups of ten or more. The deadline for registration is Nov. 25. Preregistration is being conducted on a space-available basis. For details call 925-3301.

Texans re-elect Joel Gregory

AUSTIN, Texas (BP) — Texas Baptists re-elected Joel Gregory, pastor of Travis Avenue Church, Fort Worth, as president and adopted a \$68.5 million Cooperative Program unified budget for 1989 during their annual meeting here.

Attorney warns churches: do business with care

By Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP) — Two recent court decisions should serve as a warning to churches to conduct their business with care, said a Baptist church-state attorney.

Oliver S. Thomas, general counsel for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, said while courts traditionally have refrained from ruling on questions pertaining to church doctrine, governance or internal business,

"A significant number of states appear willing to intervene in the business of the church if it is conducted in an improper manner," Thomas said. "If, for example, the procedure for a particular activity — such as firing the pastor — is set forth in the church bylaws, it must be followed. If the bylaws are silent, the state's non-profit corporation act may be controlling."

Thomas cited two recent state court cases as illustrations. The first case involved proxy voting and the second inadequate notice of a special business meeting.

In the proxy voting case, 57 proxy votes were submitted in a move to fire the pastor of First Baptist Church, Fairbanks, Alaska. The Alaska Supreme Court ruled the church's bylaws did not clearly prohibit proxy votes.

The Louisiana Court of Appeal invoked its state's non-profit corporation act in a case involving the Bethlehem Missionary Baptist Church in DeSoto Parish, La. The act requires advance notice of special meetings — such as one held where a motion was made to fire the pastor of Bethlehem Church. The court ruled the meeting was void and ordered the pastor reinstated.

Thomas offered four precautions to

help churches avoid such legal challenges:

— Review and update church bylaws on a periodic basis, making sure the procedures for conducting business are both clear and specific and paying particular attention to seemingly insignificant details such as proxy voting, notice and amendments. "Any ambiguities in the bylaws will be resolved by the particular state's non-profit corporation act," Thomas said.

— Elect a competent moderator who is familiar with the church bylaws, as well as "Robert's Rules of Order." Thomas explained, "More than one lawsuit has been filed because of improper parliamentary procedure."

— Play fair. "Even when the stakes and emotions are high, follow the rules," he advised. "The end rarely justifies the means, even in church business meetings."

— Be a good loser. "The Apostle Paul instructed Christians to refrain from taking their disputes before civil magistrates," Thomas said. "Jesus said as much in the Sermon on the Mount, 'If anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also; and if anyone would sue you and take your coat, let him have your cloak as well.' The church member who sues his own congregation stands to lose much more than he gains."

This article is based on a column in the October 1988 issue of Report from the Capital magazine.

It is a tiresome way of speaking, when you should dispatch the business, to beat about the bush. — Plautus

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HOME MISSION BOARD, SBC

Jackson singles teach in Taiwan

A group of single adults from First Church, Jackson, traveled to Taiwan in July to lead in "English camps," assisting Mississippi missionaries Rob and Nan Sugg and Lloyd Lunceford.

The Suggs, whose home church is First, Jackson, printed posters with photos of the Mississippi volunteers, giving information about English classes and evangelistic meetings, hanging the posters in public places around Tainan.

The group worked in two churches: Park Road Church in Tainan City with 35-40 in worship, and Salt Light Chapel, which has 4-10 in worship.

The group passed out tracts in the night market with their Christian testimonies which had been prepared and translated into Chinese. These were accepted, read, and passed on to others in the market. Several of the travelers gave tracts to people worshipping in local temples.

For three days, the group, working in the two churches, taught children basic English words, songs, and played games using English. The volunteers taught high school and adult classes evenings. Since English is taught in Taiwan's high schools, the work was mainly in basic skills and usage including a narration of the gospel. The two programs averaged 75 children and 60 adults.

One young man, Eric, made a profession of faith after receiving a publicity flier two days earlier. None of his family or friends are Christian.

The volunteers led in evangelistic services in the two churches over the weekend. Preaching were FBC's minister to singles Rusty Barksdale, and MBCB staffer William Maxwell, both of whom used translators. "It goes to prove that the Gospel message is the same in any language," said Maxwell. "That doesn't change. The basic needs are the same."



The First Church, Jackson, Taiwan mission team, from left: front row, Charlotte Triplett, Jan Arnold, Lynn Cain, Rusty Barksdale, Sue Barksdale, Ann Southerland; second row, Bill Cook, Debbie Dorsett, William Maxwell, Sheila Skipper, and Larry Blaylock.



Larry Blaylock reviews English color names with the children's English class in Taiwan.

Northern Plains dissolved convention

RAPID CITY, S.D. (BP) — More than 300 Northern Plains Baptists, staff and former staff, agency personnel and friends joined together Oct. 19-20 to celebrate the end of the Northern Plains Baptist Convention — which died giving birth to two new fellowships.

The celebration was held at Calvary Church here where the convention was organized in November 1967. The convention began operation Jan. 1, 1968, and will cease Dec. 31, 1988.

The convention started with 75 churches in Wyoming, Montana, South Dakota, and North Dakota. The same area today holds 253 Southern Baptist churches.

The Wyoming Southern Baptist Fellowship, which had existed for 20 years and was meeting annually, separated into a convention in January 1984, reducing the Northern Plains Convention to a three-state area.

That same year the convention's executive board adopted a plan for development of fellowship offices in

Montana and in the Dakotas and the phasing out of the Northern Plains Convention.

Montana Southern Baptist Fellowship, with offices in Billings, and the Dakota Southern Baptist Fellowship, with offices in Bismarck, will relate to the Home Mission Board as a state convention.

During the celebration, appreciation was expressed to the Home Mission Board, to the Mississippi Baptist Convention, which has had a partnership relationship with the Northern Plains Convention, and to the Florida Baptist Convention, which has a partnership relationship with the two new fellowships.

The occasion was also used to honor John Baker, who was the first and last convention executive director. He assumed that post Jan. 1, 1968, and retired Dec. 31, 1976. The convention's executive board turned to Baker again in 1984 when Roy Owen resigned, and Baker returned to phase out that convention and assist in the establishing of the two fellowships.

Missouri Baptists affirm priesthood of believer

OSAGE BEACH, Mo. (BP) — Missouri Baptists affirmed the doctrine of the priesthood of the believer and the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs during their annual meeting Oct. 24-26 at Tan-Tar-A resort in Osage Beach.

In a resolution which passed with little opposition, messengers "reaffirmed Baptists' emphasis on the priesthood of the believer and the principle of congregational government."

The resolution, submitted by D. Leslie Hollon, pastor of Wornall Road Baptist Church in Kansas City, "assured the dedicated laypersons who undergird this convention's work... that our convention

respects, honors and intends to preserve these principles."

Messengers also affirmed the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, the Washington-based religious liberty watchdog organization composed of nine Baptist denominations.

The resolution, presented by Rudy Pulido, pastor of Southwest Baptist Church in St. Louis, appeared to be in contrast to action taken on the national level.

In passing the resolution with no discussion and limited opposition, messengers resolved to "oppose any and all efforts to weaken the work and witness of the Baptist Joint Committee through the withdrawal of funds."



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Can rich people enter the kingdom?

QUESTION

My family is pretty well off and all my life I have had the best of everything. I try to be a good Christian, and I give to the needy through my church. But ever since I read the Scripture, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom," I've been worried. Does this mean I don't have a place in God's kingdom?

ANSWER

God loves everyone, regardless of how much or how little a person may have. Jesus had friends among the wealthy as well as the poor. His clothes, the upper room where he and his disciples shared their last meal, even the tomb in which he was buried all belonged to rich persons.

When he spoke of the camel go-

ing through the eye of a needle, Jesus was not talking so much about material wealth as about pride. Salvation is not possible as long as we depend on ourselves — whether our riches, our intelligence, our social standing or anything else but God. Further on in that passage, the people asked who could enter the Kingdom of Heaven, and Jesus told them very clearly that only with God was it possible. We can neither buy nor beg our way into the kingdom.

Some Bible scholars believe that Jesus was referring to a small gate in the city wall of Jerusalem — a gate so small that it was called "The Eye of the Needle." To get through the gate, a camel had to have its pack removed, and it had to kneel down and creep through the gate — a perfect picture of how we must lay aside all our human pretensions and kneel humbly before God.

It is good for you to be concerned about the proper use of your wealth. Riches can make us forget our dependence on God, or become selfish and greedy. But the Bible tells us that it is the love of money that is the root of all evil, not money itself. The proper use of our money is a worthy gift to God and a sign of our commitment to him.

Jericho '89 launches experiment

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Five national agencies have joined forces to design summer events for 1989 and 1990 that will immerse children, youth and adults in the sights and sounds of Southern Baptist home and foreign missions efforts around the nation and the world.

The events, which usher in the final decade of Southern Baptists' Bold Mission Thrust to the year 2000, will take place at the denomination's Ridgecrest (N.C.) and Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist conference centers under sponsorship of the Foreign Mission Board, Home Mission Board, Sunday School Board, Brotherhood Commission, and Woman's Missionary Union.

"Jericho: A Southern Baptist Missions Festival 1989" will launch the two-year experiment, July 8-14 at Ridgecrest, and July 29-Aug. 4 at Glorieta.

Follow-up events are set for the summer of 1990.

The Foreign Mission Board will suspend its annual Foreign Missions Weeks at the two conference centers during 1989 and 1990 because of Jericho '89 and follow-up events. The Home Mission Board will conduct its regular Home Missions Weeks and the WMU its regular leadership weeks in addition to Jericho.

Planners describe the Jericho '89 experience as "a festival, an event, a conference all wrapped into one" for all ages and backgrounds. That includes preschoolers; children, who will have a day camp; and youth, who will have a specially programmed youth track, "A Journey to the Future."

The youth track will feature a week of hands-on missions experience interspersed with video presentations, musical drama, computer simulation, international games, special conferences, and personal Bible study and prayer.

The program will include a global village of yesterday, today, and tomorrow; an original musical drama written especially for Jericho; activities re-creating the sights and sounds of missions; Bible study, prayer participation, fellowship and inspirational speakers; first-hand contact with home and foreign missionaries; a home and foreign missions fair; recreational activities from around the world; and special conferences on a range of subjects related to missions, ministry and the world scene.

Participants may register for Jericho '89 at either the Ridgecrest or Glorieta Baptist conference centers after Feb. 1, 1989, and write Jericho '89, Woman's Missionary Union, Box 830010, Birmingham, Ala. 25283-0010 for more information.

In the hours of distress and misery, the eyes of every mortal man turn to friendship; in the hour of gladness and conviviality what is our want? It is friendship. When the heart overflows with gratitude, or with any other sweet and sacred sentiment, what is the world to which it would give utterance? A friend. — Walter Savage Landor



Faces and places

by Anne Washburn McWilliams



Thursday, November 17, 1988

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 7

"Life begins at 40"

"Life begins at 40," they say. For Danny Ethridge, life at 40 took a 90-degree turn. That year, 1984, he gave his testimony during a lay revival, using the story of the prodigal son in Luke 15. He knew then for sure God was calling him to preach.

That brought up some questions. Did he have the courage to quit his job at Hardin's Bakery to enter college at his age? With Angela, his oldest daughter already in college; Sue Ann, his youngest daughter, in high school; and Rusty, his son, in second grade, how could he possibly pay more student fees? Could they live on his wife, Linda's, earnings as a school bus driver and relief mail carrier?

Like Peter walking on the water, he took several steps forward. He quit his job and sold his motorcycle and a couple of other vehicles, got a student loan, and applied for some scholarships. He began a little supply preaching. Unlike Peter, he didn't sink. He just kept on walking.

I think he and his family have proved that people can go to our state Baptist colleges if they really want to. They've used all four of them as a testing ground.

From his home at Neshoba, Danny could easily drive to Clarke. When he made a 4.0 average in his first semester grades, his confidence soared; he knew he was on his way. At Clarke, he was chosen president of the ministerial association and president of the honor society, Phi Theta Kappa, and elected to Who's Who in American Junior Colleges. Soon Wahalak Church in Kemper County called him as pastor. He and Linda would make the hour's drive there twice weekly and stay in a little house near the church over the weekends. Linda continued to drive a school bus to Union and to deliver mail.

Scholarships came to him from the Baptist Foundation; Big Ridge Church, Biloxi; and Hardy Church, Grenada, along with financial aid from Wahalak and others.

"I could not leave my family," he recalled. "If Clarke had not been there, I might not have been able to be in the ministry today." This summer he was graduated from

Mississippi College (all classes on Clarke campus). This fall he enrolled at the New Orleans Seminary Extension Center at MC.

Danny Ethridge was born in Meridian, next to youngest of eight. His father died when Danny was three. His mother, Bonnie, went to work in a shirt factory. "Until I left home, my

In 1840, the state Baptist convention met at Wahalak Church in Kemper County, which was one of the largest Baptist churches in the state.

mother always made sure I was in church," he remembers. Once, J. M. Snowden, his pastor, took him into a Sunday School room and talked with him about Jesus. Then, about age 10, he accepted Christ and was baptized, at Pine Grove Church, Lauderdale County.

At 16 he got a job in a grocery store and moved into a Meridian apartment. He got into the wrong crowd, he told me, ones who shot pool and drank beer. He stopped going to church, and only after his marriage did he return.

One of his sisters introduced him to Linda, daughter of Erastus Busby, while she was a student at Hinds Junior College and he was working at Hardin's in Jackson. On their first date, they ate at the Elite Cafe. A few months later they eloped. She began work for South Central Bell.

About 11 years ago they built a house at Neshoba, to be nearer his mother. They moved their letters to Neshoba Church. "That was like a new start for me when I walked down that aisle," he recalls. "The people were friendly. They accepted us." He began teaching a class of teen-age boys in Sunday School, and helping with associational youth rallies. He was ordained as a deacon. Linda served on the building committee. "The more we served the Lord," he said, "the closer we felt to him." The more he did, the more he wanted to do. The next step was his surrender to preach.

Both he and Angela were in Clarke one year before she transferred to Carey. During high school she had worked part time at Laird Hospital. In Hattiesburg, she was music therapist at Forrest General Hospital. Last spring she completed her course work at Carey and now is doing an internship in music therapy at Terrebonne Retardation Center in Louisiana. She has been nominated for a Rotary Scholarship, to study in England.

On Oct. 23, Angela was married in a ceremony at Neshoba Church, to Jimmy Garrard, son of the pastor of Greens Creek, Petal. In fact, when I met her parents at their home a few days later, I tasted some of her wedding cake.

"Angie sang solos, but Sue Ann played basketball," said Danny. "She was my little boy until I got Rusty." Sue Ann, a junior at Blue Mountain, was this summer a BSU missionary to Nevada. As Star Student in high school at Union, she chose Mrs. Burnell Adkins, math teacher, as Star Teacher. (Mrs. Adkins happened to be the wife of the eye doctor for whom Sue Ann was working. But Sue Ann, who also got the Math Award, said she chose her not for that reason! "Mrs. Adkins made math come alive for me.") Her majors at Blue Mountain are physical education and home economics.

Rusty (Russell Lee), now 12, is in sixth grade, advanced class, and plays trumpet in his school band.

Clearly, the whole family has worked together to make college education dreams come true. Danny said that the girls are thrifty, and that their lack of many material goods taught them responsibility. "Though they did not get so many things, they got lots of love," he said. Sue Ann, who has three scholarships at Blue Mountain, told her parents she would prefer not to have a car at college. Linda, who likes to sew, has made many of the girls' clothes, and her own. A good cook (W. D. and I learned from the great lunch she provided), she must have known how to stretch food dollars. Her tuna casserole was marvelous. And so were the beans

(Continued on page 8)



The Ethridges are pictured here as they were in 1984, the year Danny was called to preach. Angela is standing behind her parents, Danny and Linda; her sister, Sue Ann, stands behind her brother, Rusty.

Wahalak:

Like a cat with nine lives!

Wahalak Church, organized in Kemper County in 1833, first met in a log cabin. In the frontier state, the church played a role in settling disputes between neighbors. One investigating committee reported in 1835: "October — Brother Deal admitted killing his neighbor's cow and painting his own cow to look like the dead one, but he said he didn't mean to deceive anyone. He said he shot the cow accidentally."

In 1837, the church moved to Mt. Pleasant Academy; the planks of the old one were sold for \$8.80. A new building was completed in 1839, ready for the state Baptist convention to meet there in 1840. It was then one of the largest Baptist churches in the state.

When the Mobile and Ohio Railroad station missed the old community by six miles in 1857, a decline of the community began. During the War between the States, the church was dissolved.

In 1884, the church was re-established. In 1896 it was moved to a building shared with Methodists and Presbyterians. Shortly afterward, the church a second time was dissolved. In 1970, it was re-organized. In 1937, it was dissolved again.

In 1945, the present church was organized with Joe Abrams as pastor. They met in the church that had been used since 1896. It had to be remodeled before they could move in. That building burned in 1953.

The church (which in spite of war and fire kept springing back up!) then began to meet in an abandoned school.

Under leadership of O. P. Moore, pastor in 1977 and faculty member at Clarke, a new church building was begun, with donations from all over the U.S. The new building opened May 11, 1980. In 1988, Wahalak has 75 resident members. Danny Ethridge is pastor.

SCRAPBOOK

Every day should be Thanksgiving day



Every day should be thanksgiving day.
Every day we should bow our heads and say
Father, we thank thee.

For giving us amazing hope through Thy amazing grace — amazing love.
For the blessed assurance of life eternal in heaven above,
Father, we thank Thee.

For our churches, our community where the people are
bound together with golden strands of friendship and
have love and care for one another,
And everyone is a thoughtful neighbor — every man is a loving brother,
Father, we thank Thee.

For our country, where we have freedom to fly our flag,
To worship, to pray, to sing,
Where our church doors are always open and our school bells ring,
Father, we thank Thee

For our homes, our herds, our gardens, and our fields of grain,
For the golden sunlight that fills the air,
For sunsets, rainbows, and flowers,
For the blessed soothing rain,
Father, we thank Thee.

For our peaceful forest lands where giant oaks and elms
spread their branches and whispering pine trees grow,
Where deer, and squirrels, and birds live together and
crystal waters flow,
Father, we thank Thee.

For Thy forgiveness,
For reaching down with Thy healing hand from Thy throne above,
For touching our lives in such a tender way, giving us
amazing hope through Thy amazing grace, Thy amazing love,
Father, we humbly thank Thee.

—Oneita W. Hollingsworth
Gloster

My Father

I know my Father loves me because
he ...

gave me life.
released me.
drew me.
heard me.
answered me.
forgave me.
gave me mountains.
gave me valleys.
rescued me.
blessed me.
healed me.
sealed me.
gave me peace.
gave me joy.
chastens me.
comforts me.
died for me.
arose for me.
lives with me.

I love my Father because he first
loved me.

—Debra Boyd
Biloxi

Just for the Record



GAs at Thrasher Church, Booneville, were honored with a special recognition service, Oct. 2. Pictured are Angelia Robinson, leader; Christy Johnson; Hope Ross; Emily Robinson; Becky Sparks; Jane Robinson, leader; Laci Huddleston; Amanda Robinson, and Missy Shook.



Christmas-in-August was the theme of a recent recognition service for Mission Friends, GAs, and Acteens at Highland Church, Vicksburg. Each participant carried in a gift and put it under a Christmas tree for missionaries. Leaders for Mission Friends are Esther Lee, Annette Miller, and Charlotte Embry. Robin Herrington is the leader for GAs. Jackie Richardson is the leader in Acteens. Bill Patten is the pastor.

Mission Friends, pictured, top left, front row, are Marla Richardson, Drew Peacock, Laura Steen, Anna Larson, Rachel Miller, Amanda Gettinger, Jennifer Jennings; back row, Andrew Embry, Melanie Herrington, Jeff Gettinger, Ben Hugley, Randy Miller, and Amber Larson.

GAs, top right, front row, are Whitney Richardson, Erin Loper, Brea Hugley, Tina Shinn, Mindy Shinn, Rachel Patten, Amber Miller; second row, Carrie Handley, Melissa Herrington, Shelley Windham, Nikki Rogers; back row, Amanda Brown, Amanda Richardson, and Tara Hall.

Acteens, bottom right, are Marla Richardson, crown bearer; Tanya Self, Queen; Randy Miller, scepter bearer; Stephanie Self, Queen with Scepter; and Melanie Herrington, crown bearer.

The music department of Highland Church, Laurel, presented a "Simply Gospel" concert during October. On this occasion, Highland's Celebration Choir premiered the 102 new choir robes recently ordered.

Featured during the concert were Highland's Celebration Choir, Celebration Singers, Ladies Rejoice, Four-given, Hazel Lewis, and Robert Lightsey.

Union Church (Rankin) will have a dedication service for its new education-fellowship building, Nov. 20. There will be regular Sunday morning services, Sunday School, 10 a.m., worship service, 11 a.m., and lunch at noon. Dedication service will be 2 p.m. Vernell Daniels is pastor.

This year marks the sixth season of Highland Church, Laurel. Over 3,000 people are expected to this revised version of "Home for Christmas" during the three performances which will

be held Dec. 9, 10 and 11 at 7 p.m. Complimentary tickets are available at Highland Church, 2513 N. 7th Avenue, Laurel, or by phoning Highland's music department at 428-8493.



Evergreen Church, Winston Association presented Ricky Livingston with a 10 year perfect attendance pin for Sunday School. Pictured are Leonard Howell, pastor; Ricky Livingston; and Clayton Sinclair, Sunday School superintendent.



Churches adopt expanded plan

The following churches have adopted the Expanded Annuity Plan since those reported in the Oct. 13 issue of the Baptist Record: Chickasaw: Woodland; Clarke: East Pleasant Grove; Clay: Faith; Grenada: Emmanuel; Gulf Coast: Cowan Road; Monroe: Cason; Northwest: Mt. Zion; Oktibbeha: Sturgis; Prentiss: Tusculumbia and Thrasher; Rankin: Eastside; Scott: Steele; Simpson: Fellowship; Webster: Fellowship and West Shady Grove.

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Revival dates

Victory Temple Baptist Church, 1185 Dublin, Greenville: Nov. 28-Dec. 2; 7 nightly; Harold Branch, Corpus Christi, Tx., evangelist; Eddie C. Jones Sr., pastor.

Center Ridge, Yazoo City: Nov. 20-22; Billy R. Williams, pastor at First, Gautier, evangelist; Bubba Lammons, music; Harvest Supper, Sunday night; Sunday services at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon. and Tues. at 7 p.m.; Bryan Abel, pastor.

Gooden Lake, Belzoni: Nov. 20-23; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Gary Bowlin, evangelist; Shelley and Irene Johnston, music;

nursery provided; David Blackwell, pastor.

New Harmony Church, (Union County near Blue Springs): Nov. 18-20; Fri., 7 p.m., Jimmy Russell, Pontotoc, preaching, "Keynotes" singing; Sat., 7 p.m., Danny Sparks, Thrasher, preaching, Ricky and Cheryl Martin, Amaziah, singing; Sun., 11 a.m., R. J. Wilemon, Tupelo, preaching; Floyd Findley, Pontotoc, singing; Sunday, 6 p.m., fellowship meal; 7 p.m., Ricky Blythe, Tupelo, preaching, Buddy and Kay Bain, Tupelo ("Morning Show") singing; Charlie Ransier, pastor.

Pastor's daughter dies at age 33

Trudie Pickens Hollis, 33, died at Baptist Hospital, Memphis, Tenn., on Nov. 1. She was daughter of the pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Vicksburg.

Survivors include her husband, Joseph Leon Hollis, and one daughter, Melissa Hollis, of Vardaman; her parents, Ken and Martha Pickens, Vicksburg; sisters, Deborah Dianne Castles, Tupelo, Shirley Susan Edmondson, Vardaman, and Connie Lynn Pickens, Okinawa; grandparents, Mrs. Annie Pickens, Tupelo, and Mrs. Mildred Atkinson, Mooreville.

Funeral services were held at Pryor Funeral Home, Calhoun City, on Nov. 3. Burial was at Mt. Herman, Calhoun County.

HARVEST DAY: Beulah, Inverness: Nov. 20; services, 10 a.m.; lunch served at noon; Gospel Notes, Cleveland, guest singers afternoon service, 1:30.

Faces and places

(Continued from page 7) green salad, candied carrots, and hot muffins!

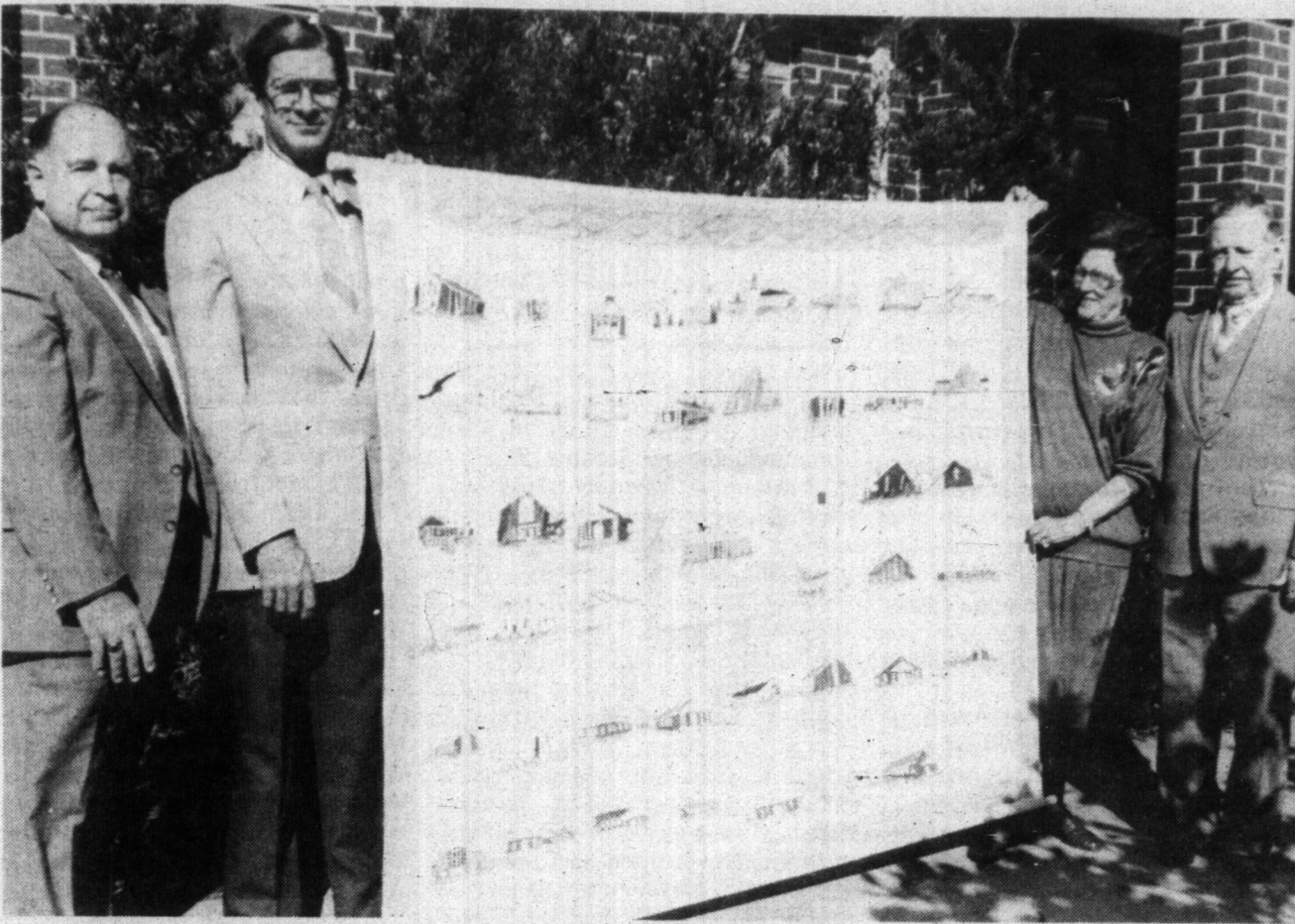
For his home office, Danny had made a handsome desk by glueing a door atop a keepsake desk from Hardin's. He was still reveling in the gift of a library of old and rare books from E. C. Farr, pastor, formerly of Scooba, who has moved to Memphis. He'd refinished an antique corner cupboard, also a gift from Farr, and filled it with books. "Everybody in our family likes to read," he said.

We talked a bit about Wahalak Church and its history; he said the state Baptist convention met there in 1840.

As he and his wife stood holding hands like 16-year-olds, I thought, "It's true. Life can begin at 40."

Mississippi Baptist activities

Nov. 20-23 Foreign Missions Study (WMU Emphasis)



Quilt shows Jackson County churches

Mrs. Mary Cole of Gautier depicted for the Jackson County Baptist Association a bit of its history by painting pictures of each of the 44 member churches on a large quilted wall hanging. The hanging, presented to associational director, Ernest Sadler, at the annual meeting at Franklin Creek Church, will hang in the Jackson Baptist Center in Pascagoula. A picture of this building forms the center of the series of paintings. Using photographs, Mrs. Cole said she spent from 6 a.m. until 10:30 a.m. for three weeks, sewing the quilt and painting the churches, from the oldest, Ocean Springs, formed in 1832, to the newest, Ridglea Heights, near Escatawpa, formed in 1985. The former principal of Live Oak Academy, Mrs. Cole worked among the Indians for the Baptist Association when she first moved to Jackson County. "I wanted to do something that could leave that portrays the history of the work in the county. God gave me the idea," she says. Left to right are W. R. Storie Jr., director of ministries for the association; Ernest Sadler; Mary Cole, and her husband, William Cole.

ches, from the oldest, Ocean Springs, formed in 1832, to the newest, Ridglea Heights, near Escatawpa, formed in 1985. The former principal of Live Oak Academy, Mrs. Cole worked among the Indians for the Baptist Association when she first moved to Jackson County. "I wanted to do something that could leave that portrays the history of the work in the county. God gave me the idea," she says. Left to right are W. R. Storie Jr., director of ministries for the association; Ernest Sadler; Mary Cole, and her husband, William Cole.

Names in the news



New Orleans Seminary's Student Body Association members for 1988-89 are (left to right) Todd Allen, master of divinity student from Jackson, president; Jodie Robin, master of divinity student from Dusan, La., secretary; and Leroy Brewer Jr., master of divinity student from Starkville, vice president. The SBA offers such activities as festivals to raise money for world hunger, special chapel services, and mission trips.

Senior adult Homecomings

A group of 16 senior adults from East Corinth and Calvary Churches in Alcorn Association recently attended the annual "Fall Fling for the Young at Heart" at Tishomingo State Park.

Senior adults from East Corinth Church have begun a choir program. A special Christmas musical will be presented on Dec. 18 at 10:45 a.m. Lily Culp is the senior adult director.

Line Creek, Morton: Ronnie Robinson, pastor, Mt. Moriah, Brookhaven, memorial message; Mrs. Cynthia Stuart will offer a program of sacred songs; Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; worship service, 10:30 a.m.; and fellowship meal at noon; Donnie Stuart, music director and assistant pastor; Line Creek Cemetery Association meeting, 1 p.m. in sanctuary.

First Church, Tchula: Harvest Day; Nov. 20; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; lunch following; Ladell Blanton, pastor.

Revival results

Immanuel, Cleveland: six for baptism, four by letter, and eight rededications; Lucius Marion, pastor emeritus, Clarksdale Church, Clarksdale, evangelist; David Stephan, minister of music/youth, Calvary, Jackson, music.

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Slouching toward Nashville

Editor:

Thank you for responsibly adhering to the highest qualities of professional journalism. Your balanced, non-biased reports enable the perceptive reader to arrive at sensible conclusions regarding the convention controversy.

This requires considerable courage and dedication on your part. Doubtless you have been and certainly will be subjected to intense criticism and pressure.

Early on I thought that perhaps the spirit of Savanarola was being revived. Now it is all too apparent: Torquemada is slouching toward Nashville to be reborn.

Please continue the good work.

E. Leonard Posey Jr., M.D.
Jackson

Music in Korea

Editor:

How wonderful it is to be a Mississippi Baptist serving the Lord in Korea! Our lives and mission efforts have been blessed in the past few days by the presence of 40 music directors from our great state. Praise God that these men were able to come and use their talents in praising the Lord and proclaiming his name throughout the peninsula. Their presence has been a blessing to everyone.

The singing of the men was wonderful, and their endeavor of singing arrangements in Korean as well as three folksongs was astounding. The Koreans loved and understood them all. The group sang to about 7,500 people in attendance in services and were televised over the KBS national television station. They handed out more than 30,000 pieces of material in the form of testimonies and invitations in five metropolitan areas.

There was an enthusiastic response in two high schools where more than 30 percent of the students are non-believers. Only 30 percent of the students are Christian. Total enrollment: 3,700 students. What an opportunity to witness!

Of course our Baptist churches will be strengthened by the presence of this group and the development of our church music program will be felt because of the testimony of the men.

We want to thank the Mississippi churches for sending these 40 ambassadors to us at this time.

Major McDaniel
Music missionary
Taejon, Korea

No trespassing

Editor:

I totally agree with your editorial entitled "Breaking the law" and appreciate your publishing it. Though the trespassers at abortion clinics use the terminology of Christianity, I can not believe that God is pleased when we violate some of his laws and commandments to uphold his other laws and commandments. God is not divided against himself. You correctly pointed out that the battlefield is in Congress and not in the streets and on private property.

In a constitutional sense, the citizens and voters of this nation are Caesar. Not to exercise the power of the sword unless we hold the

magisterial office, but that power to enact just laws through the election of our representatives. We must therefore render unto the enforcement arm, police, courts, etc., even unto unjust laws while we render unto ourselves the responsibility to correct them through our vote and support for God-fearing magistrates and representatives.

Carl D. Ford
Laurel

Well put. — Editor

Enjoyed testimony

Editor:

Margaret and I were retired from the Foreign Mission Board last year (my age was 70). We spent 15 months establishing a home in Oklahoma and then came back to Israel, where we were blessed with a little house on the southwest hills above the Sea of Galilee. We are planning to stay till "Lottie Moon" time just now.

As a Baptist representative for some 44 years in Israel now still concerned to do what I can under the Lord's leadership of people of my vintage, I enjoy trying to understand what is happening in and to my denomination — for which I owe so much in training and support — and the review of the Baptist Record for a year has greatly helped me to keep abreast.

First, let me thank you for the many articles about how the Lord has led this one and that through the years. Not only is it an inspiration to hear these testimonies but also to see your concern that they will be known through publication.

It is my conviction that as the hand of the Lord is clearly seen in the lives of those who love him, our faith in his goodness and faithfulness is strengthened and we learn what my pastor in youth (Preacher Hallock of Norman, Okla., First) so drilled into us: "pray about little things in your life. You will discover that he is interested in all the small matters and concerns in your life."

For instance, I loved the story as "Guest Opinion" of the lady whose hips were divinely healed. You put it right on the editorial page. That does not seem to happen in many of our SBC journals, so we leave the vast number of such stories to the Pat Robertsons or the Jimmy Swaggarts. Bless you!

Then I enjoy getting creditable stories and update on the sad and sickening condition of the silly SBC quarrel and not so silly takeover by we know whom. Somehow the sensible treatment — and bold treatment — of these juvenile, non-Baptist shenanigans must be fully exposed. I believe that it is just what you are doing and that "truth crushed to earth will rise again" in spite of our rush to quench the Holy Spirit in the nascent creedalism some would bind us with.

In other words, once again, thanks for your thoughtful editorials and choices of published opinions. Keep up the good work.

R. L. (Bob) Lindsey
Israel

Brotherhood trustees cut budget

By Tim Nicholas

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP) — Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission trustees heard a report on ways to improve the commission's image, voted a budget reduction to reduce its deficit and elected new officers during their meeting here, Oct. 21-22.

The trustees, commission staff, and state Brotherhood leadership met jointly for several sessions, including one to honor Norman Godfrey who died in May. The commission named its media center after the late first vice president and hung his portrait in the center.

The 76-page image improvement report was an administrative communications audit, said Brotherhood President James Smith.

Included in the report were concerns about the commission's accessibility to the public and responsiveness to Baptist state leadership and trustees. The report also ad-

resses marketing effectiveness and readability of materials produced by the commission.

The report indicates that the organization has a poor self-image and that "we have not realized our own competency," Smith said.

In a banquet after the report was discussed by trustees and staff, Smith made a commitment to competency, accessibility, responsiveness, and excellence. For too long "Southern Baptists have equated missions and women," he said, noting the commission must not lose track of magnifying missions as its challenge.

In other business, trustees approved a \$150,000 budget reduction for the current year. As of Sept. 29, the commission was \$159,402 over its budget with another \$100,000 borrowed and \$35,000 owed to its printer. Some new products cost more than estimated, and the commission is selling several


products at a loss, Smith said.

A committee consisting of state leadership and commission staff chaired by Lloyd Jackson, Brotherhood director from Virginia, updated a 1984 "Missions Impact 2000" report aimed primarily at curriculum and training.

Included in the update were recommendations to ask the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board to fund new commission staffers to work in both Hispanic and Black relations.

New officers are Chairman Billy Summerlin, a hospital administrator at Baptist Medical Center in Gadsden, Ala., and a member of Twelfth Street Baptist Church; Vice Chairman Don Varnado, a medical group administrator in Alexandria, La., and member of Calvary Baptist Church; and Ellis Norris, a program analyst with the Federal Drug Administration in Washington, D.C.

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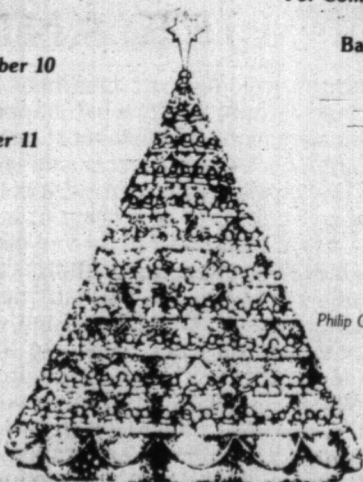
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SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON COMMENTARIES

The foundation of God's covenant

By Frank H. Thomas Jr.,
Exodus 19:1-20:21

When Israel left Egypt, they went under the leadership of Moses toward a rendezvous with God in the wilderness. When they came to this point of rendezvous in the wilderness of Sinai, they encountered the Lord who began to construct a relationship with them. This relationship was called a covenant.



Thomas

The beginning of the covenant included a bit of history as God reminded his people of that which he had done for them. His condition was that if they would obey his voice and keep his covenant, they would be his own possession among all peoples. They would be to him a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

God expected a response from Israel. Moses called the elders of the people and set before them the words which God had given. The people came together, heard the words of God, and responded by saying, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do." When Moses reported this response of the people to God, the Lord promised that he would descend to them in a thick cloud so that the people might hear when he spoke with Moses and that they might then

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believe Moses forever.

As the people prepared to meet God, Moses instructed them to consecrate themselves, wash their garments, and be ready by the third day. On the third day the Lord would come down upon Mt. Sinai and would give the law. Moses warned the people to set bounds around the camp so that no one should go up into the mountain or touch the border of it. Whoever would touch the mountain would be put to death.

Verses 16-25 describe the coming of God upon the mountain. The description seems like a severe thunder storm or perhaps a severe volcanic eruption. The intention of this description was to convey the thought that God's presence was awesome. God wanted the people to hold him in awe so that they would obey him. The Lord summoned Moses to come up into the mountain and to bring Aaron with him. The priests and the people were not to come up, but were to remain at the foot of the mountain for Moses' return.

Chapter 20 begins with the revelation of God to the people in the following way: "I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." Israel was to know God as their deliverer and their liberator. Throughout the remainder of scrip-

ture, God appears as deliverer and liberator. Supremely in Jesus Christ, God appears as Savior of his people.

In the remainder of chapter 20, the famous Ten Commandments or Ten Words are listed. They can be separated into two parts: The relationship between the people and God, and the relationship between people and each other.

The first four commandments take with extreme seriousness the relationship between God and his people. They were to have no other gods before him; they were not to make any graven image of anything in heaven above or in earth beneath or in the water under the earth. Since this was their understanding of the universe at that time, they were not to worship anything in all the universe in place of God. They were not to take the name of the Lord in vain. This means that they were not to take God's name lightly or use it in an empty way without following through on praising him and obeying his commandments. In other words, they were not to swear in God's name in any way. Finally, they were to remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. The sabbath was a holy day for rest and worship.

The remainder of the commandments describe interpersonal relationships. These include the honoring of one's father and mother, an important relationship in ancient Israel. They include the prohibition against illegal

murder or premeditated murder of an individual by another. Resource materials suggest that this commandment really does not speak to the issue of capital punishment or war. It really centers in upon the premeditated vengeful acts of murder which individuals take against each other.

The commandment against stealing may have first of all referred to the stealing of a man. Man stealing was clearly prohibited in Israel. The last commandment against coveting really has to do with desiring and stealing material things. The commandments clearly forbid stealing, whether it is stealing a person or stealing the material or possessions of someone else. The other commandment has to do with bearing false witness against one's neighbor. Israel was commanded to expect the truth, bear the truth, and tell the truth at all times.

These commandments were understood as not only religious observances but also the foundation for civil society. It is quite probably true that the Ten Commandments and other commandments given by God became the basis of civil law and the constitution for Israel and the Northern Kingdom in the years to come. God's commandments are still an excellent foundation upon which his people can build their lives today.

Thomas is pastor, Alta Woods, Jackson.

Suffering for truth: 'Blessed are they which are persecuted'

By Robert Earl Shirley
Jeremiah 37:1-38:13

The setting of our lesson this week finds the city of Jerusalem under siege by the Chaldeans. When the army of Pharaoh came out of Egypt, the Chaldeans were convinced



Shirley

that they were moving against them so they interrupted their offense for the moment and pulled back. Thereupon, Jeremiah delivered a message to King Zedekiah urging him not to be deceived by their departure and insisted that the final victor would go to the invaders.

God himself had commanded that the prophet deliver the message to the city that their overthrow was certain and that resistance on their part was suicidal. Jeremiah's repetition of this prophecy was taken as proof of his siding with the enemy, and he was charged with treason. Delivering such a message was painful for the man of God, for he loved his people and his country, but his

UNIFORM

greatest loyalty was to his God.

Although the present day preacher and witnessing lay person is called to proclaim the Good News of the Gospel of Christ, it is also necessary at times to give a warning concerning the rejection of that Gospel. Several television evangelists have gained an audience by telling the world only what it wants to hear. Christianity is offered to all people, but it must be accepted on God's terms.

For a while, Jeremiah sought to separate himself from the people and started out of the city to go through the Benjamin gate. Unfortunately, he was confronted by a sentry named Irijah who charged him face to face. Denials were of no avail, and Irijah seized him and took him to the princes who beat him and threw him into a prison in the house of Jonathan.

After some days had passed, Jeremiah was called to the court of King Zedekiah to whom he repeated the prophecy, complained regarding his present confinement, and requested that

he not be sent back to that prison lest he should die there. The king responded favorably to his request and the prophet was simply kept a prisoner in the court of the guard. The leniency of Zedekiah was short-lived, however, and the anger and insistence of the princes soon prevailed. Once again Jeremiah was thrown into a dungeon, or cistern, one so loathsome this time that he literally sank into the mire.

It is a sad commentary concerning the king that one in such a high position and with such power could be swayed by those over which he had authority. Unfortunately, modern Christians are still too greatly influenced by peer pressure, worldly advertising, popular fads, and even common gossip. There will always be a need for church members to be faithful to God and stand for the truth regardless of the consequences.

When Ebed-melech, an Ethiopian of some authority in the palace heard of Jeremiah's predicament, he appealed to Zedekiah on his behalf, and the king gave him the authority and the resources to rescue the prophet from the cistern. Thus Jeremiah was to remain in the

court of the guard until the fall of the city. Although we cannot know Ebed-melech's feelings or motivation in doing all that he did, we may presume that he reacted to the unfair treatment being given to a man fighting for what he felt to be right. There are many today who deserve and would profit greatly from the sympathetic words of a Christian person who has the interest and takes the time to understand his problems.

On the surface, there can be no doubt that the command given by God did favor the enemy. His message advised the people of Jerusalem to cease their resistance and surrender to the invaders. What needs to be remembered is that God's people had broken their covenant and they were being brought into captivity as a discipline measure to bring them back into the proper relationship to Jehovah.

People in any country or generation who have to suffer to remain loyal to God in the face of worldly opposition can take comfort in the words of Jesus when he said, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

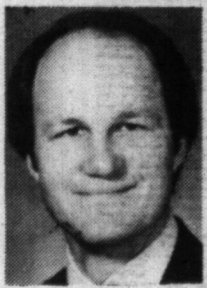
Shirley is pastor emeritus, Parkway, Tupelo.

There are two ways to seek a door for the Word

By Steve Odom

Acts 16:10; Romans 15:18-24; Colossians 4:2-4

I remember as a teenager playing basketball out in the neighborhood quite often. One thing to remember about neighborhood sports is that



Odom

the rules depend upon who is playing, not necessarily upon the actual rules of the game. Consequently, there are many brands of neighborhood sports. One brand of neighborhood basketball is called "make it-take it." The rule is that if one team makes a goal, then that team takes the ball. The other team gets the ball only when the opposing team misses a goal. As long as you make it, you take it.

This just may be a parable of opportunity. We stay on top of the game as long as we are making opportunities and then taking them. If we ever miss an opportunity to make a goal, we may lose the chance to keep the ball. Perhaps this neighborhood parable has something to say about opportunities for sharing the gospel.

LIFE AND WORK

The sports metaphor is a good one for communicating what happens in the process of evangelism. In most team sports there is an offense and there is a defense. Though the defense scores sometimes, it is the offense which does most of the scoring. It is the offensive initiative which leads to the opportunity of scoring. Granted, opportunities to share the good news of Christ occasionally just fall into our laps. But more often, opportunities to be evangelists come to us when we make them, when we are initiating them on the offense.

The theme of this quarter's lessons has been "Paul: The Gospel in Life." We have seen in Unit I how Paul responded to the gospel. Now in Unit II we are looking at Paul as an example of sharing the gospel. In our focal passages for this lesson, how obvious it is that Paul created his opportunities for sharing the gospel by initiating them under the leadership of God's guiding Spirit. It seems Paul was compelled to go from place to place until he found opportunity to share the gospel in a way that would respect the persons to whom he preached and

the message which he proclaimed.

The account of the Macedonian call in Acts 16:6-15 is an example of Paul's determination to keep moving toward opportunities to share the gospel. Whenever one door of opportunity closed, he moved to another and another and another until he found the right time and place to share his faith. Paul had such a keen sense of God's involvement in the task of spreading the good news, that he trusted his sense of when the time and place was right to share the gospel. Paul kept moving until he was convinced that the opportunity was right, and then he preached the gospel.

Romans 15:18-24 shows Paul constantly on the move creating opportunities for evangelism. Notice again the mention of God's guiding Spirit in Paul's communication of the gospel (verse 19). Paul's "ambition to preach the gospel" (verse 20) was an ambition that was motivated and empowered by the Spirit of God.

Imagine what can happen when we try to create our own opportunities based on our own ambitions apart from the leadership of God's guiding Spirit. History bears out the fact that personal ambition and misguided motives in evangelism hinder the cause of the gospel and

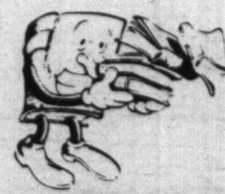
create insurmountable barriers for many people. The Crusades and the Inquisition of the Middle Ages are gross abuses of spreading Christianity that still leave bad tastes in the mouths of many. We must always subject our ambitions and motives to the careful scrutiny of God's guiding Spirit.

Colossians, one of Paul's later letters, reveals an ever-increasing desire in Paul to create opportunities for sharing the "mystery of Christ" (Colossians 4:3). He asked the Christians in Colossae to pray for him and his fellow evangelists that they might have opportunities to make the gospel clear (4:2, 4). Paul wanted the Colossians to pray that God would open a door for the word.

We might easily conclude from Paul's method of operation that whatever doors were opened to him, were doors upon which he knocked seeking entrance. There are two ways to seek an open door. Stand passively and wait for the one inside to open, or actively knock and initiate the opportunity to enter. Which way do you think will more readily open to us a door for the Word?

Odom is pastor, University Church, Hattiesburg.

Baptist Record



Book reviews

Coalition works to develop religious liberty curriculum

By Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP) — In an effort to help the nation's schools feel their way through a "minefield of controversies" surrounding the question of religion and education, a diverse coalition of educators, scholars, and religious leaders has joined forces to develop curriculum on religious liberty and its role in a pluralistic society.

The group — working in cooperation with the Williamsburg Charter Foundation, a non-partisan, non-sectarian, non-profit project concerned with the place of religion in public life — is working to develop a five-lesson curricular unit titled "Living with our Deepest Differences: Religious Liberty in a Pluralistic Society."

During a news conference announcing the curriculum project, Ernest L. Boyer, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and chairman of the project's editorial review board, said: "For far too long, we've had a remarkable silence on teaching about

religion in the nation's public schools.

"This silence is not because of a conspiracy, but because of confusion about what such a curriculum should include and a genuine concern that to discuss religion in the classroom might be viewed as indoctrination or a violation of the conscience of students, as well as a violation of the fundamental principles of the Constitution.

"The problem is that this silence has led many to conclude that public schools are, at the very least, indifferent to religion or, at the very most, actively opposed. Most importantly, perhaps, the failure to include systematically the study of religion in the school curriculum has reduced the quality of the education we are providing to our children."

Project leaders said the curriculum will be developed around three goals:

— To explain the history and significance of the First Amendment religious liberty clauses and their decisive contribution to individual and

communal liberty and to American democracy.

— To examine the advantages and responsibilities of living in a modern pluralistic society and to demonstrate how practical dilemmas can be answered in terms of tolerance and mutual respect rather than bigotry and violence.

— To deepen each student's appreciation of the principles of religious liberty for peoples of all faiths or none and to establish a strong civic commitment to the groundrules by which all citizens can contend robustly but civilly over religious differences in public life.

In addition, the leaders said, curriculum materials — which are to be written for students in fifth, eighth, and 11th grades — will be developed so as to be non-partisan and non-sectarian, constitutionally permissible, educationally sound, politically constructive, and stylistically strong.

Kathy Palen writes for the Washington BP bureau.

Lowrie, D. L. A GLAD BEGINNING — A GRACIOUS ENDING. Nashville: Broadman, 1988.

The author was recently elected executive director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. Prior to that, he was director of the State Missions Commission of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

The author states in the introduction to the book that he changed churches seven times in his ministry and, like most pastors, made some mistakes along the way. He states the intention of the book is to give some guidance to the pastor just beginning in the ministry. Little has been written on the subject of beginning and ending pastorates, thus the book is not the result of research but the author's personal observations.

The book contains 14 chapters. The first seven are under the title "Glad Beginnings" while the final seven are under the title "Gracious Endings." Much of the content of the book has been repeated in other books on similar subjects. Yet the book would prove helpful reading for any pastor regardless of what stage of ministry he might be in but especially the young pastor. The book would also be very helpful reading for pastor search committees.

Reviewed by Greg Potts, Pastor, Providence Church, Meadville.

Coffey, Stan. BUILDING THE GREATEST CHURCHES SINCE PENTECOST. Broadman: Nashville, 1988.

The author is pastor of San Jacinto Baptist Church in Amarillo, Tex. He was president of the Pastors' Conference of the Southern Baptist Convention 1987.

The book is largely a book of sermons by the author. There are 10 chapters in all. A good book for all pastors and staff members.

Reviewed by Greg Potts, Pastor, Providence Baptist Church, Meadville.

Wayne Dehoney, THE DRAGON AND THE LAMB: THE RESURGENCE OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. Nashville: Broadman, 1988. Paper, 176 pages.

Wayne Dehoney professor of preaching and evangelism at Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, draws from his frequent travels in China and good historical research to narrate a fascinating story of the revival of Christianity (the lamb) in China (the dragon).

Dehoney devotes a chapter to introduction and one to conclusion, and the other eight chapters describe cities or regions in China where Christianity is thriving. The reader feels like he is being taken on a tour of the country.

The book is full of surprises. All Protestants are united in one church, and they consider themselves in a "postdenominational era" (p. 73). A large church in Chengdu had six pastors: two Baptists, two Church of Christ of China, one Canadian Methodist, and one from the China Inland Mission. Now they worship under one roof, tolerating differences and emphasizing similarities (p. 73). Chinese Catholics are not growing as quickly as Protestants, but they have

managed well since they cut all ties with the pope in 1957.

There are many women preachers and women deacons in China. One elderly woman evangelist, Xu Han Ming, told Dehoney that her father had been a pastor but had died of cancer, and told her to carry on the work of the gospel, so she did (p. 122). Most Christians meet in house churches. There is a desperate shortage of leadership. For instance, Guangxi has over 12,000 Christians but only 15 pastors for the whole region (p. 49).

The Chinese are now free to read the Bible and witness, but Christians cannot and should not go as foreign missionaries, says Dehoney (p. 166), because of the peculiar situation known as the "Three-Self Patriotic Church." The churches are self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating (p. 35).

Dehoney explains that while Christians should not go to China as foreign missionaries, the door is wide open for Christians to go in other capacities, such as English teachers, and witness. In fact, Christian English teachers are preferred (pp. 168-169).

The Dragon and the Lamb is an eye-opening and inspiring book which forces American Christians to examine their own faith. Once the reader picks it up, it will be difficult to put down without finishing.

Reviewed by Bob Rogers, pastor, Calvary Church, Gloster.

Howell, John C. CHURCH AND FAMILY GROWING TOGETHER. Broadman: Nashville, 1984.

The author is professor of Christian Ethics at Midwestern Baptist Seminary. The book is another in the Broadman Leadership Series.

The book is organized into eight chapters. It contains some excellent material on the importance of the family and the ministry of the church to the family. The author also deals with some practical ideas for strengthening family life. Reviewed by Greg Potts, Pastor, Providence Church.

Videotape bookings increase in Singapore

SINGAPORE — More than 1,200 films were shown last year to more than 58,000 people through the Baptist media center in Singapore. From those showings, 300 people accepted Jesus Christ as Savior. One person reported her non-Christian father is open to the gospel after watching the video, "Jesus," three times in the Cantonese language.

A showing of the same video in a Mandarin-language version resulted in four conversions in a small group setting. And one youth reported her sick father listened to some audio cassette tapes in Hokkien, a Chinese dialect, and accepted Jesus before he died.

Court will examine subliminal messages

RENO, Nev. (EP) — A Nevada court has agreed to examine the existence of such subliminal messages in rock songs, and to explore questions of liability for actions arising from such hidden commands.

State District Judge Jerry Whitehead has ordered CBS Records to produce the master tape of the album "Stained Glass" by British heavy metal rock group Judas Priest. Whitehead is hearing a lawsuit brought by parents who contend that the album caused their children to form a suicide pact.

The case stems from a 1985 incident in which Raymond Belknap and James Vance, then 18 and 19 respectively, listened to the Judas Priest album for six hours while drinking and smoking marijuana, then formed a suicide pact. Belknap killed himself with a shotgun. Vance then shot himself with the same gun. Vance did not die, but is seriously disfigured.

CBS Records claims it cannot find the master tape of the 1978 album, but an attorney representing Belknap's family says he believes the tape exists and will contain subliminal messages.

Judge Whitehead has said he will have to decide whether subliminal messages are protected by the First Amendment guarantee of free speech. "The court did not believe it was automatic that the First Amendment protects the rights of subliminal speech," Whitehead said, explaining his decision to pursue the question.



Evergreen breaks ground

Groundbreaking services were held at Evergreen Church, Winston Association, Oct. 30, for a multi-purpose building. Those taking part in the ceremony are pictured, left to right, Leonard Howell, pastor, Dixie Wylie, Joy Childs, Clayton Sinclair, chairman of building committee, Roger McCully, Morris Massey, Mack King, James Parker, and Charles Joiner.

Baptist Record

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901 COMMERCE ST SUITE 401
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